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The Water Doctors of Malvern, with Special Reference to the Years 1842 to 1872

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THE beautiful range of hills to the west of the Vale of Evesham and the Severn Valley has from early times been noted for the curative value of the spring waters. Richard Bannister in his *Breviary of the Eyes* (1622) writes:

> "A little more I'll of their curing tell
> How they help sore eyes with a new-found well
> Great speech of Malvern Hills was lately reported
> Unto which spring people in troops resorted."

John Wall.—The six sleepy hamlets snugly tucked in hillside pockets grew with the years and housed the sick in search of the health-giving waters, but no attempt was made to develop Malvern as a spa until John Wall, a one-time Fellow of Merton College and one of the original physicians of the Worcester Infirmary, told of remarkable cures which he had observed there. Was it to be wondered at, for had not Hippocrates, Horace and Tasso all observed that mountain springs which faced the rising sun had healing properties? Wall described patients with scrofula, sordid ulcers, fistulas and palsies who had toiled up the hillside to refresh their withered limbs in the spring waters. One lady, it will be recalled, so far recovered from her blindness as to be able to discern the fleas hopping on her bed.

Wall's monograph, first published in 1756 with a view to raising funds to provide proper accommodation at the wellside, went through two subsequent editions and the popularity of Malvern grew to such an extent that public breakfasts, assembly balls and an annual venison feast were held. The aristocracy patronized the spa and sharpened their jaded appetites in the mountain air, while their fashionable ladies graced the terraced walks adjoining the hotels and John Dugard's commodious lodging house where for fifteen shillings a week one was provided with full board, including tea, coffee, fire and candles. Benjamin Stillingfleet, the botanist, writing in 1757 to Mrs. Elizabeth Montague, speaks of the wonderful waters but adds: "I do not doubt but that the air and exercise, which at present is absolutely necessary here, the well being about two miles from the town, contribute very much towards restoring the health of the patients." Wall carried out an analysis of the spring waters with the aid of William Davis, the Worcester apothecary, commenting on its extreme purity; hence it was echoed:

> "The Malvern water, says Dr. Wall
> Is famed for containing just nothing at all."

Wall retired to Bath in 1774 and died two years later. Thereafter the popularity of Malvern as a health resort waned.

John Wall's younger son, Martin, Clinical Professor of Medicine at Oxford, had samples of the water sent to him for analysis and, in a reprinted edition of his father's work published in 1780, was able to substantiate his findings. Evidently patients still made use of the waters, for Thomas Warton in his *Ode on His Majesty's Birth Day*, wrote in 1790:

> 'Health opes the healing power her chosen fount]
> In the rich veins of Malvern's ample mount."

A. Philip Wilson, an Edinburgh graduate and a physician of Worcester, who later changed his name to Wilson Philip, made good use of the Malvern waters and published his analysis in the year 1805. In 1831 William Addison, a practitioner of Malvern and a clinical microscopist who published much in the early days of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, wrote in a volume dedicated to the Duchess of Kent, whose physician he was, that Malvern was "annually becoming more and more the resort of visitors and invalids seeking health or protection from disease". The Hereford Mail left the White Horse Cellar, Piccadilly, at 8.30 a.m. and reached Malvern village at 3 p.m. the following afternoon.

James Wilson and James Manby Gully.—But the prosperity of Malvern really began with the advent of James Wilson and James Manby Gully in 1842. Wilson, then aged 35, had spent his early years in North Wales and had been educated in Dublin, London and Paris, where he had studied with Broussels. For some time he was resident surgeon in the Liverpool South Dispensary and then he bought a practice in Sackville Street, off Piccadilly, but sold it in 1840 in order to accompany Lord Farnham on the grand tour. Finding this old gentleman too exacting, however, he parted company and before long found his way to Graefenberg, where he came under the spell of Vincent Priessnitz, both as a patient and a pupil.

Gully, born in Kingston, Jamaica, the son of a coffee planter, was a year junior to Wilson and was educated in Liverpool, Paris (where he was a pupil of Dupuytren) and Edinburgh. Under the Emancipation Act of 1832 he was deprived of all prospects of his father's great wealth, so that in order to supplement the precarious livelihood of a young physician, he had recourse to translating and writing.

A fondness for music had brought these two physicians together but they had other things in common: they had each studied in Liverpool and Paris, and they had a distrust of orthodox medicine. I suspect that the experiences of James Currie of the Liverpool Infirmary, who had so successfully treated fevers and other diseases with hot and cold water, were fresh in the minds of both of them. Currie, it will be recalled, had developed this form of therapy after hearing William Wright relate how, when stricken with fever *en route* from Liverpool to Montego Bay, he had ordered the deck hands to throw buckets of sea-water at him, with speedy and complete success. Wilson, too, had studied with James McCartney of Trinity College, Dublin, who made use of water dressings in sickness. "If men knew the properties of water", McCartney had said, "and how to apply them so as to produce all their effects, water would be worth more than all other remedies together." Five years before coming under the spell of Priessnitz and while still in Sackville Street, Wilson had written a monograph on the curative effects of simple and medicated vapours applied locally.

At Graefenberg the keen mind of Wilson soon saw the medical possibilities in the ideas of Priessnitz, the modest and illiterate peasant, who had so quickly achieved an international reputation as a healer. Priessnitz had not forgotten his early struggles against orthodox medical practitioners, who had resented his intrusion into the realm of therapeutics, but had taken comfort when the judge, having asked a patient which of the two, the plaintiff doctor or Priessnitz the defendant, had cured him, was told: "Why both, your honour, the doctor relieved me of my money which went for the drink and Priessnitz of my gout." Nevertheless, Priessnitz had many medical pupils, but he eyed them all with suspicion. "Doctors have learned too much", he would say, "they have neither knowledge nor faith in the healing virtues of cold water and therefore do not use it with the necessary confidence."

Disease was due to vicious humours, the result of drugs and too much food. It was his aim to expel the bad juices. To this end he made his patients exercise until they were ravenous. Potatoes he allowed only in winter because, he maintained, they interrupted digestion and sleep. Hunger, the autocrat, we read, reigned supreme at Graefenberg.

Wilson was a diligent and observant pupil and on his return to England sought out his friend Gully; they decided that the Worcestershire highlands most nearly represented the climate and landscape around Freiwaldau in Silesia. One morning in the month of May 1842 Wilson and Gully surveyed the city of Worcester with some curiosity, wondering if the roar of the local medical lions, and in particular Charles Hastings, would be heard eight miles away in Malvern, and joined the Hereford coach at the Star and Garter. An hour later they pulled up in front of the Crown Hotel. A few stragglers, who welcomed this daily excitement of the arrival of the Royal Mail, and the postman in his smock—for he was also the milkman—were the only ones to witness the coming of the doctors who were so quickly to transform this village into a prosperous town.

Wilson settled in the Crown Hotel, bought the lease and before long it was known as Graefenberg House. Gully returned to London to wind up his affairs before joining his partner in Malvern. Wilson's first patient was the local carrier, aged 64, a notorious drunkard who suffered from the gout and complained of stomach pains and cramps in his legs. Wilson, who found his patient thin, haggard, subicteric and asthmatical, had him well in ten days, attributing his disorder most provocatively to the arsenical treatment which Hastings had prescribed. It is not to be wondered at that this unfortunate patient became a *causus belli* between Hastings and Wilson. The temporary improvement in the health of the carrier was the means of inducing the local plumber and glazier to consult the water doctor and also a 75-year-old man who, crippled with rheumatism to such an extent that he had his chin bent down to the breast bone, must have presented a problem in rehabilitation to the enterprising Wilson. Thereafter, patients flocked to him and soon the little village was early astir with bath attendants passing from house to house at 5 o'clock in the morning. Wilson wrote two books in quick succession, styling himself Physician to His Serene Highness Prince Nassau: the second volume on "stomach complaints and drug diseases" was dedicated to "the suffering and much-abused stomachs of Her Majesty's faithful subjects" and it included an engraving of Napoleon at St. Helena in his second year of his cancer of the stomach. The causes of stomach disorders, said Wilson, are food, physic and fretting. Water was the sovereign remedy for everything. The body was largely composed of water, wrote one hydropathist, so one used water to repair the body just as one used cloth to mend a jacket or glass to replace a broken window.

Wilson and Gully were not the first to practise the hydrotherapy of Priessnitz in this country. Richard Claridge, a captain in the Middlesex Militia, who was at Graefenberg with Wilson, published an enthusiastic account of the water treatment in January 1842 and founded societies for encouraging the cult. A Dr. T. J. Graham had, however, already opened a hydropathic establishment at Stansteadbury, Hertfordshire, late in the year 1841, the medical director being Joseph Weiss, formerly of Freiwaldau, while C. von Schlemmer had set up as a water doctor at Ham, Surrey, in December 1841, moving to Stansteadbury in the following June. Neither Stansteadbury nor Ham achieved the fame of Malvern, whither patients came from all over the world.

Wilson and Gully soon parted company and an estrangement ensued, which happily was remedied in later years. The Crown Hotel, which Wilson took over as Graefenberg House, is now, according to my friend Mr. Howard Mitchell, replaced by Lloyds Bank; it lay between the Mount Pleasant Hotel, which still flourishes today, and the former Bellevue Hotel, now shops. Wilson later, at a cost of £18,000, built Priessnitz House which eventually became and remained, until a few months ago, the County Hotel. Gully built two embattlemented buildings, Tudor House for men and Holyrood House for women; they were joined by what the men patients called the Bridge of Sighs. Together they now constitute the Tudor Hotel, on the main road to the Wells, just a couple of hundred yards beyond Bellevue Terrace.

The bath.—The general plan was the same wherever you went. You were called at 5 a.m., stripped by your bath attendant and wrapped tightly in a cold wet sheet and packed in blankets. At first you shivered but gradually a warm refreshing glow developed and you sank into blissful slumber. An hour or so later the attendant returned, you were released from your envelope and requested to sit in a portable bath while a pitcher of coldish water was poured over you. After dressing you met your fellow patients and set off up the hillside with your Graefenberg flask in your pocket and instructions to drink at the springs. Wilson himself on one occasion at Graefenberg consumed thirty flasks before breakfast. He claimed it made one cheerful, hungry and wide awake. "You wash your face with water", he said with some conviction, "so why not your stomach, too." Bulwer Lytton (who later became Lord Lytton) once wrote:

"Amongst all my most brilliant recollections I can recall no periods of enjoyment at once more hilarious and serene than the hours spent on the lovely hills of Malvern. . . . The rise from a sleep as sound as childhood's—the impatient rush into the open air while the sun was fresh and the birds first sang—the sense of an unwonted strength in every limb and nerve—the delicious sparkle of that morning draught—the breeze that once would have been so keen and biting, now but exhilarating the blood and lifting the spirits into religious joy."

Charles Dickens, however, a patient of Gully's, tells of "cold-waterers" dashing down the hills with severe expressions on their countenances "like men doing matches and not exactly winning". Another speaks of the chilled appearances of the patients at the wellside, as if they were in need of blood rather than water.

Breakfast served at long tables in a large dining-room consisted of bread and butter, treacle, milk and, if you still wanted it, water. After breakfast you saw the doctor and received your bath orders for the day. The rest of the morning was free unless you had been condemned to the cold douche, when you awaited your turn in the garden or played battledore and shuttlecock in the recreation room. A healthy patient who was making good progress, as indeed most of them did, was deemed fit for the douche about the tenth day. The douche baths were at the end of the lawn in a series of wooden houses, and the ordeal amounted to a hogshead of cold water discharged in a torrent lasting from a half to one and a half minutes through a pipe three inches in diameter from a height of twenty feet. One victim who had descended the steps into the execution well wrote: "When it struck me straight

on the shoulder it knocked me clean over like a ninepin. . . . A momentary rush, like a thunderstorm, was heard over me, and the next second the water came roaring through the pipe like a lion upon its prey and struck me on the shoulders with a merciless bang, spinning me about like a teetotum." Not all the stories retailed by the bath attendants were calculated to assuage the anxieties of the awaiting victims. One man had been hit by a heavy icicle which caused his back to bleed. An old lady, with a view to shortening the fall of the stream, stood on a chair; but the added weight of the torrent caused the chair and the patient to collapse in confusion. Neither age nor sex excused a patient. The anonymous author of "Three Weeks in Wet Sheets" said that most of the promenaders were called away in turn. A door would open and a bath woman would make a cabalistic sign to one of the young patients, who would obediently disappear into the appointed hut. A minute or two later one would hear her half-frightened half-ecstatic shriek of nervous delight as the torrent fell on her fair frame.

The regimen.—Dinner at Priessnitz House was served at 3 o'clock, the doctor sitting at one end of the table and Mrs. Wilson at the other. The doctor carved the boiled mutton—and it was always boiled mutton—and his wife dispensed fish. The occasion, wrote Richard Lane, called for a white neckcloth.

One visitor was impressed by the appeal of the cult to young ladies: "Six bright-eyed houris, whom you would sooner expect to meet in Mahomet's heaven than in a hydropathic hospital, sat opposite to us. . . . They set to like so many giants refreshing themselves. No dainty woodpeckers were the young ladies . . . they worked with knife and fork like Amazons, while looking as delicate as lilies of the valley." Amongst his companions at table he caught the guilty eye of a man whom he had seen in the Bellevue Hotel on the previous evening furtively order and hastily dispatch a brandy and soda. Strict temperance was the rule and it was woe to those who were caught with contraband food on their persons for Wilson spurned the delicacies of the confectioner and abhorred strong waters and pickles and spices. One writer describes how he had to repair to a churchyard in order to devour an illicit basketful of rich Mogul plums. Another had to cross on to the Herefordshire side of the hills in order to enjoy a cigar.

In the afternoon one relaxed—perhaps a coach drive to view the conservatories at Madresfield Court or the beauties of Eastnor Castle. Then came the sitz bath which, according to Edwin Paxton Hood, did more than anything else to foster an ultra-democratic atmosphere, for in the hydropathic establishments noble lords, honourable gentlemen, baronets, captains, tradesmen, ladies of rank and ladies who wished to be thought of rank, were all to be seen together, even sitting on the same sofa. There was a total freedom from caste. It was quite extraordinary and showed the adaptability of the English temperament. Plebeian and aristocratic blood were alike subject to the ills of mortality and to the indignity of the sitz bath. Everyone knew that everybody else was daily submitting to it. It was most humiliating. Its purpose was sedative and it was explained to patients that the whole of the intestines lying in the vicinity of some of the most important secretory organs would be enabled by the action of the water to throw off in fifteen or twenty minutes a large proportion of caloric. It helped to cool tempers and it was a "mighty tonic". Gully recommended it particularly to the tired business man before settling down to his evening meal, especially if a cold wet cloth were at the same time applied to the head. It was described as a woman's best friend.

Supper, consisting of bread, butter, biscuits, milk and a final round of water, followed at 8 o'clock and after some songs and parlour games everyone went to bed early to prepare for the ordeals of the next day. In the heyday of the cult a band played at Priessnitz House and there was dancing.

The cost.—The charges at Graefenberg House were four guineas a week to include full board, baths and medical attention, with an initial consultation fee of one guinea, later raised to two. You had to provide yourself with one blanket and two coarse sheets. Hastings taxed Wilson with making the treatment expensive, but he denied the charge. Rumours were not always correct, wrote Wilson to Hastings: It was for instance currently reported in London that he, Hastings, had placed himself under Wilson's care and that as a result his health had been perfectly restored. Wilson accused Hastings of having examined a young patient of his while he was supposed to be treating her father. The correspondence between the doctors was bitter and unforgiving.

Wilson was described as an impressive man with silky curled whiskers, quick, full of impulse and of the fire of genius; he was kind but exacting. He spoke seven languages and had an imposing array of books in his library, including seven hundred volumes on the subject of water. He was often to be seen on a thoroughbred bay mare in the village or on the hillside rounding up his patients like so many sheep. He would consult with many on the way up to the Wyche cutting and ask to see their tongues. Gully said of him: "I never knew one with a quicker eye for disease. No man was better abused by the ordinary medical press and medical crowds than Wilson, but there was more acuteness in his little finger than in the brains of those who barked at him."

Gully, by contrast, was dignified, staid but pragmatical: he was short of stature and inclined to be stout: he stood characteristically with arms akimbo. When he rode through the village he was followed by a liveried servant. He has been described as a genius with a master mind; he was profound, penetrating and resourceful. He seldom failed to fascinate a patient. His ruddy face, mostly lighted with a smile, seems to have satisfied Gladstone, Macaulay, Dickens, Charles Reade, Carlyle, Tennyson,

Darwin, Bishop Wilberforce and Florence Nightingale, to mention a few of his patients. He must have possessed considerable personal magnetism.

Spencer Wells was his patient in the late spring of 1851 for a stay of six weeks and his visit must have surprised and annoyed Hastings and his colleagues in Worcester: he had but recently recovered from pneumonia and lung expansion was deficient. Gully told him to eat only bread and lean meat, to live in the open air and take the water treatment.

Type of patient.—For the most the water doctors were consulted by patients suffering from overwork, overindulgence, lack of exercise, insomnia, and nervous dyspepsia, but they seem to have treated gout successfully. Valetudinarians comprised a large part of their clientele for there came toMalvern, we read, those who "had eaten whole cabbage gardens and turnip crops in vain attempts to get well". But Gully, more than his colleagues, seems to have gone in for genuine bed-patients. In fact as a water-curer he was second only to Priessnitz in reputation.

The water doctors reigned supreme over their patients. One observer says: "The Marquis of Anglesey, hero of Waterloo, who could chop up ironclad cuirassiers like so many lobsters in their shells, was as deferential to the Water Doctor as a drummer boy . . . Barristers who bullied the Queen's Bench cringed to the Water Doctor, while bluff Admiral "Go-it-Ned" Codrington, who blew Turks about like sparrows, followed the hydropathic leech with the fawning docility of a poodle . . . he was as jolly as a sandboy amid broadsides but he struck his colour before the first discharge of the Douche."

There was no respite even for those who at a reduced fee of three guineas boarded out. Visitors in one inn noticed an old man fresh from the summit of the Worcestershire Beacon consume with relish a plateful of bran and oatmeal mixed with two round vegetables which were either potatoes or yams. They had heard of the black broth of Sparta but had never seen human beings eat bran. But they stared with wonder and concern when they saw him embellish his antiphlogistic meal with a whole bottleful of plain cold water.

Another form of hydrotherapy was the lamp bath introduced by Gully. The patient sat swathed in blankets; under the chair was a lamp which gradually provoked the desired effect and as the sweat poured off the patient the attendant would hand him a glass of cold water "to prevent him from boiling over". When asked if anyone had actually been burnt under treatment, the attendant once replied coolly: "I have known of two instances" and with supreme tact added: "but they occurred at another establishment." Paxton Hood says: "There is nothing so likely to draw the gravy out of a man as the lamp bath." He describes seeing a London alderman, in whose bowels, as he put it, lay entombed creatures of the heavens, the earth, the air and the sea. "Never", he wrote, "did the big drops stand out on the brow of guilty malefactor more heavily than on the face and forehead of our poor suffering alderman . . . his head rising up in all its baldy ruddy Olympian grandeur out of a mighty pyramid of towels . . . that is the process for taking the black blood out of a man, that is the way to purify his skin, and rouse and energise his liver." You could, it was rumoured, recognize an alderman in the lamp bath by the smell of turtle fat! He explains the rationale of the treatment. The allopath would have made use of the lancet for in the overindulged patients the blood is carbonized, black or dark-coloured. The allopath takes it away from you altogether but the hydropath strains it through the skin.

The Neptune girdle.—Then there was the "Neptune girdle" or the Umschlag which Priessnitz practised on himself with such success when, as a youth, he was run over by a farm cart fracturing his ribs. It was simply a cold wet compress worn around the abdomen and protected by an india-rubber covering: it was removed before meals and then a new one applied afterwards. Nearly everyone wore it. The theory of it was that it increased the heat of the stomach and therefore assisted digestion. "However gorgeous the old dowager is dressed at night", wrote one of Wilson's patients, "she's in reality underneath as moist as a frog, and the curry-eating old Indian is hissing like an urn-iron in a full suit of wet swaddling clothes."

Wilson and Gully succeeded then in reproducing faithfully at Malvern the atmosphere of Graefenberg. Freiwaldau became Malvern Link and Graefenberg Great Malvern; the Marien, the Joseph and the Ferdinand springs were represented by the Holywell, the Haywell and the Chalybeate springs; the Springs of Friendship and Good Hope by St. Anne's Well; the Bernstein by the Wyche cutting; the Hamburg path by Happy Valley; Oswald's Joy by the Beacon; the Hirschbad Kamm by the Malvern and Abberley range; the Valley of the Staritz by the valley of the Severn, and the range of the Altvater by the Sugar Loaf at Abergavenny. And to be sure, the Archduke Franz Karl, the Duchess of Anhalt-Koethen and the Prince Bishop of Breslau, who patronized Priessnitz, had their opposite numbers in Malvern and many more besides. The doctors galloped on the hillside just as Priessnitz had done in Graefenberg.

The regimen was the same and the diet similar, although at Malvern more sympathy was shown to dyspeptics: but wild strawberries and cream, alas, so popular for breakfast at Graefenberg, were not available in Worcestershire. The master minds of Wilson and Gully seem to have catered carefully for the morale of the patients, for we learn that at St. Anne's Well they drank "to an andante of

Haydn's, a potpourri of Donizetti or the measured time of the Pressberg polka". This German band was invigorating the patients as early as 6 a.m. The modest premises at St. Anne's Well seem to have provided for the patients club-like facilities to compare notes on their treatment and, when the doctors were out of sight, to supplement their diet: here one could hire out knives and forks for a picnic, or eat devilled kidneys with impunity.

J. L. Marsden.—Before long another water doctor appeared in the person of James Loftus Marsden, a practitioner of Exeter, who had been converted to homœopathy after his only son had recovered from typhus complicated by "water in the brain and inflammation of its base". Marsden spent five months with Priessnitz (probably in the autumn and winter of 1845–46) and then accepted an invitation from Gully to join him in partnership for a limited period. He settled at Hardwicke House. He was a prodigious worker. One admirer described him as a man with no special originality who did honest yeoman service in the cause. He provided novelties for the patients by prescribing pulsatilla of the twelfth potency, a duodecillionth of a grain of ipecacuanha and infinitesimal quantities of china, aconite and secale cornutum. "What nonsense it all is", railed the allopaths of Worcester. But Marsden was more tolerant. Their violent language was the offspring of anger and not of philosophy. Had not analysis made it abundantly clear that the efficaciousness of the spring waters was due to the high dilution of the solids they contained?

Hydropathy had caught the eye of the public. When Edward Johnson returned from Graefenberg in March 1843, four hundred tickets were sold for his lecture at the Society of Arts, and a mass of people were unable to gain admission. In the year 1846, however, water doctors met with a crisis. Dr. James Ellis, of Sudbrook Park, was charged, on the evidence of local practitioners, with manslaughter, one of his patients having died under treatment. But the coroner absolved him from blame because the pathologists had omitted to examine the brain and so the possibility of a natural catastrophe could not be excluded. With this trial hydropathists won a moral victory over the drug doctors. Earlier in the same year Dr. (later Sir John) Forbes had written favourably of the water cure in the *Foreign and British Medical Quarterly Review*. The Worcester doctors, who had always found Malvern a profitable hunting ground for guineas, were beginning to lose their Worcester patients also.

R. B. Grindrod.—Ralph Barnes Grindrod, a temperance reformer and another disciple of Hahnemann, was a remarkable individual who set up his establishment about the year 1851 at Townsend House. It is believed that he received his licence to practise about 1830 but in the year 1855 he was one of two recipients of the doctorate in medicine of Lambeth bestowed by Archbishop John Bird Sumner.

One of his patients wrote:

"He is in truth a most lovable and delightful man. He lives for his patients and in the study of their state, their wants and their comforts, and all love him and trust him." . . . A portrait of Priessnitz (the "Columbus of Health") hung in the breakfast parlour, and over the chimney-piece in the consulting-room, adorned with medical memorabilia, was an engraving, appropriately enough, of the battle of Worcester.

Grindrod was particularly skilled at rehabilitating those whose livers had been unduly taxed in India. Certainly the food was of the blandest and the psychological approach to it must have been skilfully handled, for we read that after the meat course "various puddings, tapioca, sago, bread and rice rise to the charmed eyes of the enamoured spectators". On Thursdays the learned doctor would deliver public lectures in his spacious winter garden surrounded by the fossils in his geological museum. Spencer Wells once formed a part of the fashionable gathering which, after the lecture, promenaded through the grounds admiring the flowers or amusing themselves with a game of bowls or a trial of the ninepins. If you were a particularly favoured patient Dr. Grindrod would show you the trilobites found in the new railway cuttings, or allow you to look at objects of interest through his beautiful microscope.

Dr. Grindrod was one of the first in this country to make use of the compressed air bath which had been developed by Emile Tabarié at Montpellier and subsequently published for the Institut de Paris in 1832. The idea was not new, however, for a Dr. Henshaw in 1664 had planned a "domicilium" on a speculation of Robert Boyle, in which air would be pumped in under pressure for therapeutic purposes.

In an iron chamber a dozen patients full of faith and fully clothed would sit while the pressure was slowly advanced half an atmosphere, Dr. Grindrod in the control room observing their reactions with interest through a glass window. Burdon Sanderson praised this "important remedial agent" as he called it. Many diseases could be relieved by this treatment, it was claimed, and we read a pathetic account of a youth in the very last stages of pulmonary tuberculosis being carried into the chamber so that some small relief might be vouchsafed to him.

That the sexes should have been mixed at the establishments of Wilson and Grindrod, as in Graefenberg, excited much comment in Victorian England. By means of bath attendants might not the infirmities of female patients become known to everyone with whom they sat at table? One of

Grindrod's supporters admitted that this would theoretically be possible in reference to a low and vulgar class of uneducated patient, but it was certain that no *gentleman* would for a moment tolerate the gossip of a mere bath attendant.

Other medical settlers.—Other water doctors settled in Malvern and all of them did well. Dr. Ayerst built Wells House (now a school). Dr. Paisley was at West Malvern. Edward Johnson, an early pupil of Priessnitz, who had practised at Stansteadbury and at Hockley Heath near Birmingham, eventually came to Malvern in the early fifties and practised at Malvernbury, now a nursing home, and Ellerslie, now a girls' school. He was succeeded by one of his five doctor sons, Walter, a protagonist of the art of anatripsology. Rubbing with brandy had quite a vogue in Malvern.

Dr. Leopold Stummes was an assistant of Wilson's but he moved to Grasmere and later to Torquay.

The Worcester to Hereford railway was opened in 1859: patients now flocked into Malvern and great wealth poured into the pockets of the water doctors. Gully's income exceeded £10,000 a year. Lithographed portraits of the rival doctors in shop windows and on the walls of inns seem to bid for possession of the visitor's body on arrival in the town. Numerous books on the water cure emanated from Malvern and there was even a periodical, the *Hydropathic Record.* Malvern was described as a human laundry for the washing out of disease: one rinsed out the blues, although some retained their starched appearance to the end.

But with increasing competition to secure patients the individual discipline was relaxed: tea and coffee appeared on the menus and soon the day began later, *and* with porridge, and bacon and eggs.

In the early sixties Hastings, who for some years had been living in Malvern, led a second attack in the columns of the *British Medical Journal*, this time against those who made the water cure the pretext for the practice of homœopathy. Spencer Wells took part in this correspondence on the "Malvern Water Works" and expressed his indebtedness to Gully. Referring to his own treatise on gout, published in 1853, he wrote: "a further experience of eight years fully confirms me in the opinion I there expressed as to the good effect of hydropathic treatment, combined with pure air, cheerful society and absence from all domestic troubles, cares and anxieties. What I practise I have openly professed and urged upon others: but I deny that, by recommending hydrotherapy I have in any way supported homœopathy."

He believed Grindrod was a homœopath. Grindrod denied this and attacked Gully asserting that *he* was a homœopath and that he had actually seen globulistic prescriptions in his handwriting. This further correspondence prompted the editor of the *British Medical Journal* to write "whoever innocently sends his patients to Malvern . . . is sure to have a determined democrat of a homoeopath returned upon his hands. . . . Between the Scylla of hydropathy and the Charybdis of homoeopathy the faith of any honest believer in old-fashioned medicine who visits the Malvern shrine is in great danger of being shipwrecked at the waters there—his belief in old physic clean washed out of him". The profession had only itself to blame. Instead of welcoming hydrotherapy they had snubbed the Silesian peasant and his disciples. The result was that a grand therapeutic agent had fallen into the hands of joint stock companies and clever enthusiasts. Incidentally the reaction of the profession to hydrotherapy had been accurately forecast in *The Times* of February 14, 1842.

When Dr. Gully eventually took up his pen he wrote: "In spite of all the bitterness and bigotry with which the sectarians of the medical profession denounce each other, a certain amount of catholicity of view regarding medical treatment is gradually taking possession of the non-professional mind."

Wilson died in 1867. Gully left Malvern in 1872 and died in 1883. With his departure the water cure in Malvern received a blow from which it never recovered. Gully sold his practice to Dr. Fernie who moved to London in 1887. Marsden moved to London, but Grindrod remained in Malvern until his death in 1883. Dr. Rayner, another recipient of the Lambeth Degree, who had purchased Wilson's practice, died in 1891 and there ended the Malvern water cure. Townsend House became a Benedictine monastery: it is now part of Malvern College.

The passing of hydropathy.—Why did the cult of hydropathy die? In Malvern, for four reasons I think: firstly because of the passing of three great personalities, Gully, whom I would list first in importance, Wilson and Grindrod; secondly because as a group they were not content to practise hydrotherapy alone or with orthodox medicine, but flirted with homœopathy, thereby antagonizing many well-wishers in an age of professional intolerance; thirdly because of the drying up of some of the wells; and fourthly because of improving rail facilities, so that Britons in search of health found it more satisfying to visit the German, Bohemian or French spas, where the gaming tables being legitimate provided an exciting adjunct to the cure. But another Wilson might succeed even to-day, for there are many who would be attracted for a time by the discipline of a semi-spartan existence: which of us does not envy the experience of Lord Lytton, and would not enjoy being so re-created?

These men, who in their day were regarded by the profession as quacks, did much for Malvern, more in fact than the railway; between 1842 and 1867 it grew from a village to a prosperous town. During their lifetime they helped to educate the public—and the medical profession—in the way of health: indeed, their doctrines constitute an important chapter in Victorian medicine. They would be gratified to find that the town which they built is now a health-loving community of schools.

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